**Biography of Sherman Alexie**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Sherman Alexie was born on October 7, 1966 on the Spokane Indian Reservation in Wellpinit, WA.

Sherman Alexie, the son a Spokane Indian mother and a Coeur d’Alene Indian father, was born hydrocephalic (with water on the brain) and at six months underwent a brain operation from which he was not expected to survive. He did more than that. Despite the resulting childhood seizures, Alexie turned out to be an advanced reader and was purportedly reading novels like *The Grapes of Wrath* at the age of five.

As a teenager enrolled in the reservation schools, Alexie found his mother's name written in a textbook assigned to him. Determined not to spend his life on the reservation, he sought a better education at the high school in Reardan, Washington, where he was a top student and a star basketball player. Upon graduation in 1985, Alexie attended Gonzaga University on a scholarship from which he transferred to Washington State University after two years to study pre-med.

Fainting spells in anatomy class convinced Alexie to change his major, a decision reinforced by a love of poetry and an aptitude for writing. He graduated with a bachelors degree in American Studies and shortly thereafter received the Washington State Arts Commission Poetry Fellowship and the National Endowment for the Arts Poetry Fellowship.   
  
As a young man, Alexie struggled with alcoholism but gave up drinking at the age of 23 and has been sober since.

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**Thinking Questions**

Based on your knowledge of Sherman Alexie’s life, what things might he write about?

Based on the title of our book, The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian, what can you predict the book will be about?